COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Colchester, CT

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

March 22, 2022 ~ 6:00 P.M.
ZOOM

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice-Chair Mary Tomasi, Secretary Jessica Morozowich, Donna Antonacci, Margo Gignac, Rosemary Gignac, Christopher Rivers

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Superintendent Jeffrey Burt, Director of Teaching and Learning Dr. Charles Hewes, Principal of Jack Jackter Intermediate School Elise Butson

OTHERS PRESENT: Board of Finance Chair Andrea Migliaccio, Board of Finance Member Michael Egan

1. CALL TO ORDER
   Chair Oliphant called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT
   Karen Scholl, 167 Melanie Lane, Colchester
   Ms. Scholl stated she enjoyed the last budget presentation and that it was very thorough and the Superintendent did a good job explaining exactly what the needs are. Ms. Scholl stated she appreciated the supports put in place for students to adjust to lost learning, support in helping students who are thriving to continue to thrive as well as social emotional support. Ms. Scholl said the Superintendent is doing a fantastic job.

3. *PRIORITY DISCUSSION//ACTION ITEMS
   3.1 *2022-2023 Budget Workshop
   Superintendent Burt presented budget questions submitted to the Board of Education; all budget questions and answers are posted to the Colchester Public Schools website under the Education Budget page.

   Board of Finance Chair Andrea Migliaccio asked about mandated curriculum that has to be added this year. Dr. Charles Hewes explained that the state mandates standards but not specific curriculum resources that have to be used. The districts at the local level decide how to best do that through resources that they purchase.

   Vice-Chair Tomasi asked what the cost would be if the students in the CTAC program were outplaced. Superintendent Burt said it would be a cost of approximately

$75,000-$90,000 per student. Superintendent Burt said the CTAC program cost is much less and stated the students are able to be in our community, working locally which is a benefit to our community as a whole; a win-win.

Christopher Rivers asked about the movement of the office professional FTE in regard to the movement of one from WJJMS to CES. Superintendent Burt said the FTE goes with the position. He explained that the process is to first ask for volunteers and if there are none, work with administrators on what might work best.

Mr. Rivers asked about the state reimbursement for special education and if the 70-80% received back from them is true for all districts. Superintendent Burt said that percentage is true for all districts across the state. The money at the state level is divided between 169 districts as well as magnet schools, et al.

Superintendent Burt presented budget options and possible reductions per the Board's request from the 3.15.22 workshop. With the cutbacks presented, Superintendent Burt said it would bring the budget to .83%.

Mr. Rivers asked what would happen if the capital reserve and capital IT reserve were reduced by $25,000. Superintendent Burt spoke to the items that will need to be worked on within the next 10 years (roofs to be replaced, oil tank, etc.) Superintendent Burt said strategically it would be better to add to these reserves as the district would be in a better position to update items in the future as they cost thousands of dollars. Superintendent Burt said the district was able to fund some of the items out of ARPA grant funds (HVAC replacement, IT wireless project, etc.) Mr. Rivers and Secretary Morozowich stated that long range projects are only as good as the funds put into them and would not like to reduce those lines. Vice-Chair Tomasi agreed.

Chair Oliphant asked what it would look like to bring the increase to 0%. Superintendent Burt said to do that might mean a teacher position and reducing the capital improvement plan by $75,000; however, that is what was done with capital improvement last year so it would be continuing to push these things down the road.

Motion by: M.Tomasi
Motion that the Board of Education adopt a 2022-2023 school-year budget of $42,225,701 which represents a 0.95% increase over this year.
Second by: J.Morozowich
Discussion:
Margo Gignac said she recently sat down with the Superintendent to learn more about the budget. Ms. Gignac stated that being her first year she would like a little more time to go through it to make sure she does not have any questions. Donna Antonacci said she would also like to ask for more time to make an educated decision. Rosemary Gignac stated she would like more time as well. Chair Oliphant stated he would like more time also.

Withdrawn -Vice-Chair Tomasi withdrew her motion to allow more time for board members.

Superintendent Burt said the Board is set to present their budget to the Board of Finance on April 5, 2022. Superintendent Burt said that if the budget was not voted on at the next meeting on March 29, 2022 the board may need to schedule another workshop prior to April 5th.

Board of Finance Member Michael Egan stated that it is important that the Board of Education is comfortable that what is presented to the Board of Finance meets the educational needs of the district.

4. *PUBLIC COMMENT
   None.

   Superintendent Burt stated that all budget documents, presentations, and videos can be found on the district website colchesterct.org as well as budget walk-through videos and questions and answers. Superintendent Burt said he welcomes questions from the public and those can be emailed to budget@colchesterct.org

   Vice-Chair Tomasi thanked members of the public for joining the meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT
   The meeting adjourned at 7:07PM

*POSSIBLE ACTION ITEM